

Rachel Fletcher
Chief Executive
Ofwat
Centre City Tower
7 Hill Street
Birmingham
B5 4UA

6 April 2018

Dear Rachel

Request for information – review of freeze/thaw incidents

Further to your letter of 19 March 2018, I am pleased to provide the information requested to support your formal review of the performance and preparedness of water companies in the lead up to, during and after the freeze and thaw period.

We recognise the importance of providing high quality information to support your review and have taken care, in the limited time available, to ensure the information and data given have been subject to internal review for accuracy and, where applicable, derived from maintained formal records. Data has not been subject to review by an external assurance provider.

Our planning for, and response to, emergency events, is founded on a gold, silver, bronze command structure which ensures that tactical operational decisions are made at an operational level while strategic co-ordination takes place at the highest levels of our business. This is consistent with best practice principles developed under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and government advice to water companies under the Security and Emergency Measures Direction 1998. I, and my Executive team colleagues, discharge the role of Gold Command on a 24/7, 365 days per year basis, thereby ensuring appropriate oversight of emergency planning and response activities at the highest organisational level, and effective communication with our Board. In this instance Chris Offer, our Director of Regulation and Corporate Affairs, operated as Gold Command from 4 to 7 March. He was therefore able to brief Giles Stevens yesterday from his direct experience how the weather events at the beginning of March impacted service to customers, the effectiveness of our response and how we worked collaboratively with neighbouring companies to share resources.

As you will see from the information provided, a small number of customers experienced a supply interruption during this period. We ensured we delivered bottled water to customers on our Priority Services Register who were impacted by a supply interruption and provided regular updates for customers and retailers using a range of communication channels. We recognise the event caused inconvenience to a small proportion of our customers and have compensated them up to £75 each, equivalent to the value of more than five months of our average household bill.

I am immensely proud of how our teams planned for, responded to and recovered from the very difficult operating conditions at the beginning of March. We are, however, not complacent and look forward to the outcome of your review to learn from best practice across the industry.

Finally I look forward to meeting with you on April 20th to further discuss WRSE.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the name Simon Cocks.

Simon Cocks
Chief Executive Officer